

TYPICAL AGENDA ITEMS

Introductions

1. Who am I and why am I here?
 - Chairperson introduces himself or herself and calls the meeting to order.
 - Facilitator, if present, introduces himself or herself and describes the role of the facilitator.
 - Recorder introduces himself or herself and describes the role of the recorder.
2. Who are you and why are you here?
 - Chairperson asks participants to introduce themselves and state their interests in the topic of the meeting.

Meeting Purpose

3. Why are we meeting?
 - Chair or facilitator states the purpose of the meeting, including issues to be discussed, and asks the group for agreement on the purpose.
 - If necessary, the statement of purpose may be revised to reflect group consensus on the meeting's purpose.

Ground Rules

4. How will we interact during the meeting?
 - Chair or facilitator proposes meeting ground rules and asks the group to review and modify if necessary to reach a consensus on rules to guide the meeting.

Topics and Outcomes for Discussion

5. What will we talk about?
 - Chair or facilitator reviews the agenda, including the order and timing of topics, and asks the group to agree on it, or revise it if appropriate. Topics or outcomes may include
 - a. defining the problem;
 - b. determining the outcomes the group is seeking;
 - c. generating ideas for addressing the problem and reaching the desired outcomes;
 - d. evaluating ideas.

Next Steps

6. What are our next steps?
 - The group decides when to meet again, what tasks need to be done, who will do them, and what the time schedule will be.

Summary and Adjournment

7. Is this what we did?
 - The chair or facilitator recaps the meeting — outlining what was agreed upon, unresolved issues, and next steps — and checks with the group for agreement. The chair or facilitator then closes the meeting.

Value of an Agenda

- Clarifies which tasks and issues need discussing
- Puts these into a logical order for discussion
- Helps to identify how much time will be needed for a meeting
- Helps to keep meetings moving in order to accomplish the tasks at hand *
- Provides a way to measure the accomplishments of tasks
- Provides an outline for writing a report or summary after the meeting

* Although agendas are intended to keep meetings moving to ensure that all items are accomplished, agendas should ALWAYS be considered a guideline, not a law. Flexibility is essential to ensure that topics are resolved or tasks accomplished in the best manner, which is not always possible on a time schedule. Know which items can be tabled for the next meeting. Also know when a task cannot be completed, and be prepared to postpone it until a more appropriate time.